



**Town of Arlington, Massachusetts**  
**730 Massachusetts Ave., Arlington, MA 02476**  
**Phone: 781-316-3000**

**webmaster@town.arlington.ma.us**

## 09/20/2012 Minutes

V2020 FISCAL RESOURCES TASK GROUP  
 Meeting Minutes 9/20/12

ATTENDEES: Gordon Jamieson (Chair), Scott Lever, David Garbarino, Co-Chair  
 Vision 2020 Mary Harrison, Pete Howard (Secretary),

TOWN DAY: Gordon, Michael, Heather & Pete took turns talking to people at the Vision 2020 booth. They used a handout (Ref 1) listing the topics we are working on. Eight people signed the interest sheet w/ email addresses.

MY TAX DOLLARS: Gordon will ask the new Deputy Town Manager Andrew Flanagan to post the FY12 version and to consider doing the FY13 and future updates.

WATER & SEWER BILLING OPTIONS: Gordon summarized a conversation he had with Selectman Dan Dunn at Town Day. Dan said that the W&S Enterprise Fund reserve is running out. He expects the BoS to be asked to increase the annual fee increase of 7%.. Gordon reminded us that the MWRA provides about 30% more water than is recorded by consumer meters. If this "lost" water could be found and properly billed, perhaps a fee increase would not be needed. After discussion the following sources are possible:

Leaks

Unmetered municipal buildings (we don't know if metered or not)

Flushing through fire hydrants

Old meters which always indicate low

Gordon suggested that any expense related to addressing this problem could be financed by increasing the annual no-interest borrowing from the MWRA and that the one time savings from going to a quarterly billing system could be used to pay startup costs. Gordon & Scott will discuss this possibility with DPW Director Mike Rademacher.

SOLAR VOLTAIC FOR MUNICIPAL BLDGS: Scott suggested that several Town buildings seem to be good candidates. Pete to invite Ryan Katofsky, Arlington's Solar Coach to our next meeting to discuss this possibility.

MUNICIPAL INTERNET SUPPLIER: Scott suggested that it might be more efficient for residents to use a Town service rather than each resident making a separate arrangement with a commercial supplier. He pointed out that although there are competing suppliers, they seem to all charge the same. He compared this approach to local electric companies such as the run by Belmont. Scott provided a link to Seattle's program <http://seattlewireless.net/>.

CAN LOCAL TALENT BE MONETIZED? Scott suggested that Arlington's many highly trained and experienced professional in fields like bio-med, med-tech, high-tech as well as legal & financial might be a resource that the town could use to address the financial sustainability challenge (ie the structural deficit). A related approach, incubator facilities for startup businesses was discussed.

MASS AVE ARLINGTON vs CAMBRIDGE: Pete has studied the data provided by Adam Chapdelaine. He will present results next month.

NEXT MEETINGS .. 10/18 Room TBD. and Third Thursdays thereafter.

Ref 1 Town Day Handout

**Vision 2020**

**Fiscal Resources Task Group**

**Town Day - September 15, 2012**

## **2012-2013 Projects**

### **FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY**

Explore options to address Arlington's structural deficit\* through development as an alternative to periodic Proposition 2 1/2 overrides or service reductions

Monitor discussion of the land value tax\*\* as an equitable way to encourage development

### **WATER & SEWER BILLING OPTIONS**

Complete gathering of information on current billing and collection practices.

Develop enhanced billing/collection options for consideration by Town leadership

### **MY TAX DOLLARS**

Update spreadsheet for posting on Town website allowing individual homeowner to see exactly where how his/her real estate tax is distributed across the Town departments

### **Come join us**

Our next meeting is September 20th at 7:30 PM

Senior Center Conference Room 2nd Floor

### **Contact**

Gordon Jamieson, Chair

[gordon@transrx-inc.com](mailto:gordon@transrx-inc.com)

781-483-3266

\*Annual increase in expense to maintain services compared to annual increase in revenue

\*\*Tax rate on land much greater than tax rate on improvements. Henry George

(1839-1897) is best known proponent

[Ref 1](#)